

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Please substitute original claims 1-18 with the following:

1. (Currently Amended) An information management method comprising:

generating protection information for protecting the storage area of a recording medium storing a second string of codes recorded by a second audio coding technique from any recording, editing and erasing operations of a first apparatus adapted to handle a first string of codes by a first audio coding technique and refer to the first management data stored in a first management area;

arranging said protection information in the first management data area as one of said first management data; and

protecting the storage area of the medium storing said second string of codes from any recording, editing and erasing operations of said first apparatus, while allowing reproducing operations of said first apparatus, on the basis of said protection information when the medium storing said second string of codes is operated by said first apparatus

wherein said protection information indicates that the protection mode of the track on the medium is prohibited from rewriting.

2. (Currently Amended) The information management method according to claim 1, wherein said first apparatus is permitted to reproduce only the part of the first string of codes on the basis of said protection information when a single string of codes generated by means of both said first audio coding technique and said second audio coding technique is recorded on said recording medium.

3. (Original) The information management method according to claim 1, wherein said protection information indicates that the area that can be used by said first apparatus for recording is

made nil in said area on the medium or said area on the medium is made smaller than the allowable area of said first apparatus.

4. (Original) The information management method according to claim 1, wherein said protection information indicates that the storage information of the address information indicating the position of the area on the medium that can be used for recording by said first apparatus is made equal to nil.

5. (Cancelled).

6. (Original) The information management method according to claim 1, wherein a second management data area that can be referred to only by the second apparatus adapted to handle the second string of codes or both the first string of codes and the second string of codes is provided on said medium and

the first management data area arranged in said second management data area except said protection information.

7. (Original) The information management method according to claim 6, wherein said second apparatus is adapted to refer to both said first management data area and said second management data area.

8. (Original) The information management method according to claim 7, wherein said second apparatus is adapted to disregard said first management data area and refers to only the second management data area when said protection information is arranged in said first management data area.

9. (Original) The information management method according to claim 6, wherein said second apparatus initializes said first management data area and allows the medium to be used by

said first apparatus for recording, editing and erasing when said second string of codes no longer exists on said medium.

10. (Currently Amended) An information management apparatus comprising:

a means for generating protection information for protecting the storage area of a recording medium storing a second string of codes recorded by a second audio coding technique from any recording, editing and erasing operations of a first apparatus adapted to handle a first string of codes by a first audio coding technique and refer to the first management data stored in a first management area;

a means for arranging said protection information in the first management data area as one of said first management data, wherein

said protection information indicates that the protection mode of the track on the medium is prohibited from rewriting; and

a means for protecting the storage area of the medium storing said second string of codes from any recording, editing and erasing operations of said first apparatus, while allowing reproducing operations of said first apparatus, on the basis of said protection information when the medium storing said second string of codes is operated by said first apparatus.

11. (Currently Amended) The information management apparatus according to claim 10, wherein said first apparatus is permitted to reproduce only the part of the first string of codes on the basis of said protection information when single string of codes generated by means of both said first audio coding technique and said second audio coding technique is recorded on said recording medium.

12. (Previously Presented) The information management apparatus according to claim 10, wherein said protection information indicates that the area that can be used by said first

apparatus for recording is made nil in said area on the medium or said area on the medium is smaller than the allowable area of said first apparatus.

13. (Previously Presented) The information management apparatus according to claim 11, wherein said protection information indicates that the storage information of the address information indicating the position of the area on the medium that can be used for recording by said first apparatus is made equal to nil.

14. (Cancelled).

15. (Previously Presented) The information management apparatus according to claim 11, wherein

a second management data area that can be referred to only by the second apparatus adapted to handle the second string of codes or both the first string of codes and the second string of codes is provided on said medium and

the first management data are arranged in said second management data area except said protection information.

16. (Previously Presented) The information management apparatus according to claim 15, wherein said second apparatus is adapted to refer to both said first management data area and said second management data area.

17. (Previously Presented) The information management apparatus according to claim 16, wherein said second apparatus is adapted to disregard said first management data area and refers to only the second management data area when said protection information is arranged in said first management data area.

18. (Previously Presented) The information management apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said second apparatus initializes said first management data area and allows the

medium to be used by said first apparatus for recording, editing and erasing when said second string of codes no longer exists on said medium.